

foreign geology, so many of which are of first-class importance.

The author is gently sarcastic regarding the nomenclature of some modern palaeontology published by the society. The artificial Linnean system was adequate for the biology of the eighteenth century, which was innocent of such principles as "heterogenetic homogeneity." The plastic terminology that is in process of development in correspondence with the variability of life has lost in simplicity, while it has gained in truth. Scientific names, like other words, must be allowed to change in meaning, even though the change may puzzle geologists as much as a lawyer is puzzled to define such common terms as mine or mineral. The author notes with apparent regret that a fossil should be called a "koninckophyllid cyathophyllum"; but the Geological Society would be untrue to its inspiring traditions if it closed its journal to those whose living faith in evolution is much more than a mere verbal creed, and must be expected to influence all their practice. J. W. G.

#### ANCIENT BABYLONIAN LETTERS.

*Late Babylonian Letters.* By R. Campbell Thompson. Pp. xxxvi+226. (London: Luzac and Co., 1906.) Price 15s. net.

*By Hall*

OF all the ancient written matter that has been discovered by modern archaeological research and deciphered by the professors of languages long dead, perhaps the documents most interesting to the general reader are those which reveal to us the daily life of the people who wrote them thousands of years ago. These "human documents" are always interesting reading. Royal instructions, reports of generals or of astrologers, ministers or caravan-leaders, diplomatic correspondence, and last, but not least, the ordinary letters from one man to another, whether a man's business or pleasure, have been during the last half-century recovered from the past, and are now supplementing in a most remarkable way the formal annals of the historians. From Egypt we have the famous "Tell el-Amarna Letters" of 1400 B.C., the correspondence of the time of the priest-kings (1000 B.C.) published by Spiegelberg, and the interesting series of Greek letters recovered from the sands of Oxyrhynchus by Drs. Grenfell and Hunt, not to speak of the Coptic epistles of the monks of Deir el-Bahari in the seventh century A.D., translated by Crum and by Hall. From far Turkestan we have the wooden tablets inscribed in Kharoshthi characters, discovered by Dr. M. A. Stein, which tell us of the daily life of the Indian kingdom of Khotan in the flourishing days of Buddhism; and now Mr. R. C. Thompson (late of the British Museum), of the University of Chicago, has published an edition of a series of late Babylonian letters, being "transliterations and translations of a series of letters written in Babylonian cuneiform, chiefly during the reigns of Nabonidus, Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius," i.e. from about 550 to 480 B.C. These letters are preserved in the British Museum, and the original cuneiform texts have been published by the Trustees.

The book is published by Messrs. Luzac and Co. in

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their admirably got-up "Semitic Text and Translation Series." Print, paper, and binding are good and appropriate. As a frontispiece Mr. Thompson gives an adaptation (with English text instead of Babylonian) of a remarkable Babylonian map of the world, which we recommend to the attention of Mr. Beazley for comparison with other ancient maps. We do not believe, by the way, that this map, with its restricted knowledge, really represents the world as known to the Babylonians of the sixth century B.C. It is obviously a copy of a far more ancient map, dating from the days when the Babylonian knew of but little beyond the limits of his own fens, which he conceived as an island surrounded by the waters of the Persian Gulf.

The perusal of these letters will be useful to the modern historian who is not content merely to recapitulate the annals of his ancient *confrères*, but wishes to give a picture of the civilisation of an ancient people. With the exception of an occasional royal epistle, such as the very interesting one of Ashurbanipal (No. 1, a century older than the rest) ordering the collection of tablets for the royal library at Nineveh, now in its entirety preserved on the shelves of the British Museum, these letters were written by the ordinary Babylonian "man in the street," the ordinary middle-class inhabitant of Babylon, and his wife. For the ladies of Babylon were as busy with the stylus as those of London are with the pen, and many of Mr. Thompson's collection were written by women. They relate to the usual round of life of a civilised people as led in an Oriental country. The letters of the modern inhabitants of Cairo, Baghdad, Lahore or Delhi must be very like them. Perhaps at Benares, rather, we might get their very counterparts. For in Babylonia, as in modern India, the temples of the gods and the business of the priests were a great factor in the city life, and a large proportion of these letters "is connected with the business of the great temple of the Sun-god at Sippar," with the landed property belonging to the temple, from which the priests drew their revenues, and with the arrangements for the temple-dues, which were often paid in kind. This is an ancient touch, which we should only find paralleled now in India and the Far East. An Oriental trait is the correspondence with regard to the transport of food, goods, materials for building, &c., by beasts. The back of a beast of burden was then, as now in the same country, the only means of transport. Babylonia has not progressed a step in the direction of the improvement of transport since the days when these letters were written; and the completion of the Baghdad Railway seems still far off!

Of the ordinary letters between man and man on matters of interest only to themselves Mr. Thompson gives many specimens. Travellers in a far country write to their friends asking for news, and upbraiding their faithless correspondents, for then, as now, "one had not time to write." Husbands indite model epistles to their wives, like one, highly commended by the editor, which reads:—

"By the grace of the gods I am well, as also is Bêl-iddin. See, I am sending a letter to Iddina-

Marduk, the son of Ikiša-apli, that he may give thee the *gur* of wheat. Be not remiss in the housework, but be careful; pray the gods on my behalf, and speedily let me have news of thee by the hand of some traveller."

And so forth. In conclusion, we may congratulate Mr. Thompson on his interesting book, and, for the necessary *amari aliquid*, warn him against indulging in rather too breezy translations, such as "Why, an't please thee, have I and my daughters to pass the time in thirst for a letter from thee? Rack thy brains (for an excuse and then) by Šamaš, see why Bēl-uballit, an't please thee, hath taken away all my dates" (p. 175). Elsewhere (p. xxxii) Mr. Thompson presents an even more alarming version of the same epistle:—"Why, pray, am I and my daughters to pass the time thirsting for a letter from thee? Now, gather thy wits together, and then, by Šamaš, observe! Why, pray, hath Bēl-uballit taken away all my dates?" This style of translation is hardly sufficiently dignified, and is to be avoided. The lady Gagā, who writes the letter to her father, was no doubt a very energetic female, but Mr. Thompson's version of her filial exhortation seems to us to be rather too energetic. The index and vocabulary at the end are very complete and useful.

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

*Psychology—General Introduction.* By Dr. C. H. Judd. Pp. xii+389. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Price 7s. 6d. net.)

*The Major Symptoms of Hysteria.* By Dr. Pierre Janet. Pp. x+344. (New York: The Macmillan Company. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1907.) Price 7s. 6d. net.

THESE two books furnish yet one more proof—if further proof were needed at the present day—of the right of psychology to a place among the primary sciences. In Prof. Judd's book we have a concise and well-synthesised statement of the methods and principles of the science, in the form of a general introductory text-book; Dr. Pierre Janet shows the exclusive importance of those principles in the diagnosis and cure of a widespread disease.

Prof. Judd leaves his readers in no doubt as to his general standpoint or the guiding idea of his book. He develops his subject along the lines of "function" in contradistinction to "structure," and "objectivity" as opposed to the "subjectivity" of mere introspection, laying great stress throughout on "organisation" as the general explanation of mental products. In a well-worded preface he attempts to anticipate criticism by summarising the general principles of treatment which he has followed. Briefly they are: (1) "A functional view of mental life"; (2) the genetic method; (3) a coordination of physiological and psychological data; (4) an endeavour to make clear "the significance of ideation as a unique and final stage of evolution." These principles he follows faithfully in his book, the marked "objectivity" of treatment almost amounting to materialism in the earlier pages. Analysis of material conditions takes precedence of,

and to a great extent supplants, introspective description of mental states; moreover, the absence of any definite discussion of the general relation of mind and matter tends to intensify this impression of materialism. But if such an illusion should arise in the reader's mind it is quickly dispelled by later chapters, more particularly by the chapter on "The Concept of the Self." The nature of this concept as ultimate and supreme for psychology, though admitting of a developmental history, is very well brought out. The chapter following this, on "Voluntary Choice," is rather disappointing.

Parts of the book are of outstanding excellence. The discussion of space-perception seems to the writer an ideal of what a treatment of this difficult subject should be. The chapter headed "Experience and Expression" is also very good. It brings out well the importance of motor factors to the general structure of experience, not in the form of muscular *sensations*, as the first imperfect statements of the theory would have had one believe, but as forms of "motor organisation" in the central nervous system. In this chapter we have developed in greater fulness that central idea of organisation which dominates the whole book.

Two small points call for criticism. First on p. 97, to explain contrast effects as merely after-effects in the retina is surely a case of over-simplification. Undoubtedly the two classes of phenomena are closely connected, but the relation is more complicated than the text would have the reader believe. Secondly, what is called the Principle of Fusion (Association) on p. 223 should not be dismissed as self-evident and requiring no explanation.

On the whole, the book is an excellent treatment of the general principles of psychology, and may be confidently recommended to all earnest students of the science. It is a book that should be read more than once. On the title-page it is described as the first volume of "a series of text-books designed to introduce the student to the methods and principles of scientific psychology." We can only say that our experience of this volume encourages us to look forward with eagerness to the publication of the later volumes of the series.

Dr. Pierre Janet's book is a collection of fifteen lectures given in the medical school of Harvard University towards the end of last year. Much of the material, cases and explanations alike, is taken from previous publications of the author, as, e.g., "Névroses et Idées fixes," "L'état mental des Hystériques," &c., but the form of exposition makes of it an independent scientific and literary achievement for which all who are interested in mental diseases will be thankful to its author. Prof. Janet is admittedly supreme in the domain of pathological psychology, and the present book will do still more to confirm that estimate of his position. His statement of the major symptoms of hysteria is no mere external classification. Taking somnambulism as the typical form of hysterical accidents, he shows with copious illustration and acute argument how such symptoms shade off into fugues, double personalities, convulsive attacks, contractures, paralysis, anaesthesia, &c., while exhibiting the same essential relations in all these various forms. By the